

MFR

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12 September 1984

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Briefing on the Philippines for Asian and Pacific  
Affairs Subcommittee of the House Committee on  
Foreign Affairs

1. On 12 September 1984, the Asian and Pacific Affairs Subcommittee of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs was briefed by CIA, DIA, and INR on Communist insurgency in the Philippines. CIA was represented by NIO/EA David Gries, DIA by DIO/EAP [redacted] and INR by Deputy Director Frank McNeil. Subcommittee Chairman Stephen Solarz (D., NY) chaired the briefing and was joined for part of the time by Representatives Joel Pritchard (R., WA), Harry Reid (D., NV) and Benjamin Gilman (R., NY). Also attending were Subcommittee staff members William Barnds, Lindley Sloan, Richard Bush, Stanley Roth, and Catherine Ramsay. The briefing was conducted at the Secret level. No transcript was taken. [redacted]

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2. The first half of the briefing consisted of statements from each of the three briefers on the questions (attached) presented beforehand by the Subcommittee. INR covered the basic strengths and weaknesses of the Marcos regime and the impact of the May 1984 parliamentary elections; DIA discussed the rising insurgency threat imposed by the New People's Army (NPA) and the government's response to the threat; [redacted] the economic situation, and the corruption problem. [redacted]

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3. The remainder of the briefing was taken up by questions from the Chairman. Mr. Solarz sought additional information about the NPA, the prospect for reforms in the political/economic system under President Marcos, the likely results of any reduction in US aid, the chances of a coup aimed at overthrowing Marcos, and reactions in China, the USSR, and Asian countries to growing instability in the Philippines. The briefers discussed the trends and events leading to the present situation and the special tactical skills that have enabled Marcos to hold on to the presidency despite his ill health and growing opposition. They also discussed attitudes among the Filipino people and the military toward the regime. [redacted]

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4. At the end of this exchange, Mr. Solarz stated that he found the briefers' responses "very vague" and "not up to the standards of the past." He indicated that Administration policy did not seem to be nudging Marcos toward a restoration of democratic institutions. Mr. Solarz asked INR to prepare a list of "levers" that the US could use to apply pressure on the Marcos government with the aim of curtailing corruption and establishing a more representative system. There were no tasks levied on the Agency.

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